

The structure of contemporary social media encourages its users to consider peers, neighbors, pets, relatives, and other digital acquaintances in terms of potential revenue. Why bother to connect without recuperating a net gain? If this conditional problem mirrors the glad-handing of the professional world, or the strategic alliances among those influential coteries so enthusiastically discussed by historians, it's because friends do come with benefits. And caring is the lowest paid of the service industries – the existence of Twitter and the Big Society PR campaign won't change this. Capitalism doesn't need any health insurance, but I can't say the same for us. I still like it when my English friends suggest we "link up" and their casual semantics imply zero networking opportunities. The compulsion to politeness leaves a bad taste in my mouth – and at this rate I can't afford to let any greasy motherfuckers make me sick.

Morag Keil's painting, mixed-media sculpture, film and installation works reflect the absurd disjunction between dominant social messages and the unexceptional ways in which things actually play out – online and off.

-Kari Rittenbach

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